

## U.S. Army Europe and 7th Army

contact: paoci@eur.army.mil  
phone: 49-6221-57-5815 / DSN 370-5815  
fax: 49-6221-57-6376 / DSN 370-6376



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### FATHER, SON FLYING MISSIONS TOGETHER ON DEPLOYMENT WITH TASK FORCE LED BY U.S. ARMY, EUROPE AVIATORS

**By Sgt. Brandon Little**

12<sup>th</sup> Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs Office

**LOGISTICAL SUPPORT AREA ANACONDA, Balad, Iraq --** Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tim Kelly has been a pilot for almost 40 years. During these four decades, he has been on two combat tours in Vietnam and flown with many other pilots.



SGT CHRISARON BOOTH

Pilots Chief Warrant Officer 3 Tim Kelly (left) and his son, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ben Kelly, pose after their first flight together in Iraq. The father and son are deployed with B Company, 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation, part of Task Force XII led by U.S. Army, Europe's 12th Combat Aviation Brigade.

However, this deployment with Task Force XII, led by U.S. Army Europe's 12th Combat Aviation Brigade, has given him a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity -- to fly with his son.

"We've flown together on four missions so far," said Tim Kelly, a UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter pilot in B Company, 2nd Battalion, 147th Aviation Regiment. "He's doing a great job. He reminds me a little of myself when I was younger."

His son, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Ben Kelly, is also a pilot in B Company.

"Having gone through so much training in flight school, I already knew a lot but he did teach me a few tips and trick to flying," said Ben Kelly. "I have a lot of respect for his experience."

In addition to the Black Hawk, that experience includes having flown twin-rotor CH-47 Chinooks, OH-58 Kiowa Warriors, Bell UH-1 or Hueys and even the fixed-wing C-12 Huron.

Sometimes a pilot's knowledge and experience can be the difference between life and death.

"I know that he's my son, but in the cockpit we are both professional," said Tim Kelly. "When I think about him sitting next to me, it feels a little different but I have to treat him the same as I do any other pilot."

Ben Kelly has not made it to the position of pilot-in-command of the aircraft yet so when they together, father knows best.

"One pilot has to operate the aircraft and the other has to operate the radio," said Tim Kelly. "It works better when both pilots alternate these responsibilities."

"My father had a big role in my decision to become a pilot," said Ben Kelly. "When I was younger, he flew planes for a civilian company (in addition to military aircraft) and he let me fly with him."

The fact that this father and son team deployed together was more than a coincidence.

Tim Kelly was a colonel in the Oregon National Guard. When he learned his son's National Guard unit in Hawaii was scheduled to deploy to Iraq, he decided he wanted to hop back in the saddle one last time.

"I wanted to finish out my career the way it started -- as a pilot -- not behind a desk," said Tim Kelly.

Since he had started his piloting career as a warrant officer, his state adjutant general allowed him to be transferred to his son's unit only if he took a reduction in rank.

"I thought it would be cool to fly together," said Ben Kelly. "I also thought it would be an opportunity to spend time together."

"I thought one day this would be a good story to tell my grandson," said Tim Kelly. "I'd tell him about how his dad and I flew over Baghdad together."



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